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hear it. Never did I listen to anything sweeter. All the sorrow and beauty, all the pain and the sweetness of life thrilled and quivered in that voice; and the old first love of Japan and of things Japanese came back, and a great tenderness seemed to fill the place like a haunting." Often still does he encounter the refinement of the old spirit so delicate and frail that a brutal civilization is crushing it out. For Hearn Japan had moved too fast. In her effort to make herself strong to protect her national life and independence, she had been forced to harden herself and to turn her back upon the sweetness and refinement of her old life. The tragedy which Hearn saw was that the spirit of life for which apparently all these sacrifices were made was itself crushed under the machinery created to defend it. The westernizing had been too successful, Hearn wanted an Oriental Japan.

PAUL S. REINSCH.

University of Wisconsin.

Gorst, J. E. *The Children of the Nation.* Pp. x, 297. Price, \$2.50. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1907.

The growing amount of attention given to the physical welfare of school children in America is partly due to the inductive processes of American observers, such as the heads of city schools, health departments, and relief agencies, but chiefly to the flood of literature on this subject that has come to us from Germany, France, and Great Britain.

The book under review is serviceable because of its analysis of the conditions involved in child health rather than for the remedies proposed for physical defects, such as free meals, free eye-glasses, free everything hitherto associated with parental responsibility.

Each chapter is full of practical suggestions for teacher, parent and citizen in American school districts, rural as well as urban. For example, the discussion of school hygiene begins with a proposition that should be self-evident,—“If you take the children out of the pure air of the country, or even the less healthy air of the streets and parks of towns, you must take care not to put them into air unfit to breathe in your school.” It seems that in England, as in America, that the main fault is not so much in the defective construction of buildings as that “teachers, managers and inspectors refuse to make proper use of the ventilation provided.”

In speaking of provision for water, lighting, desks and playgrounds the author shows how common it is for schools actually to manufacture physical defects.

It is worth while for those impressed with the author's argument for free lunches, free eye-glasses and general state interference, to reflect that the fact basis of his reasoning is very slight,—as he himself admits. The European cities have discovered an alarming amount of what is called physical deterioration, but which might be proved to be a relative improvement,—though an absolute defect. Seeing clearly a need, they have hastened to remedy the symptoms. It is due to the Scotch sanitarians such as Dr. Chalmers, of Glasgow, and the medical officers of Edinburgh and Dundee.

Fortunately, conditions are not so aggravated in America as in the British cities (where, by the way, the distressing situation cannot be attributed to immigrants), and, as the author suggests, the thorough physical examination of school children begun at once and followed up consistently may obviate the necessity for the state socialism that Alfred Mosely deplors and condones in the case of Great Britain.

It is worth while to call attention to the workmanship on the book. The chapters have sub-headings significant and interesting. For instance, Children's Ailments (Chapter VII), their running page headings and frequent use of italics in topical divisions, of indentation, numbering paragraphs, index, and other devices all serve to bring out the author's message.

WILLIAM H. ALLEN.

New York.

Hamilton, Angus. *Afghanistan*. Pp. xxi, 562. Price, \$5.00. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, Importers. London: William Heinemann, 1906.

The lack of a comprehensive study of Afghanistan and its conditions has been at length supplied by Angus Hamilton in his large volume recently issued, and imported by Charles Scribner's Sons. The work required two years to be spent in its preparation and the result is most satisfactory, as the book contains much information under historical, geographical, ethnographical, commercial and political groupings. The climate, country and towns are well described, the railroad approach is accurately and minutely dwelt upon, as are also the products and minerals, exports and imports. The author, by special permission, dedicates the volume to Lord Curzon, of Kedleston, "who, by the splendour of his gifts and the wisdom of his rule has left an indelible and memorable impression upon India."

The relations of Russia to Great Britain and Afghanistan, and all borderland encroachments, are plainly set forth. The situation of Afghanistan as a buffer state, an entrance to India, will probably lead, the author believes, to encounters in the future as it has in the past. Meanwhile, despite existing treaties, the author regards His Highness Habib Ullah, Amir of Afghanistan, as an uncertain quantity in the problem of Anglo-Afghan affairs.

The illustrations are numerous and interesting, a picture of Lord Curzon being the frontispiece. A map on a generous scale serves to elucidate the text.

Philadelphia.

LAURA BELL.

Hamilton, C. H. *A Treatise on the Law of Taxation by Special Assessments*. Pp. lxxv, 937. Price, \$7.50. Chicago: George I. Jones, 1907.

With the exception of the work of Mr. Welty, in 1886, in which he devoted two chapters to street improvements and assessments, and cited only one hundred and seventy cases, this is a pioneer work upon the subject of special assessments. The necessity for a work of this kind is found in the fact that street improvements have become a necessity, and experience shows that the